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Kathleen “Kit” Sinclair, PhD, OTR/L, FWOT, FAOTA

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Sponsor Profile:
Kathleen “Kit” Sinclair, PhD, OTR/L, FWOT, FAOTA



The *Open Journal of Occupational Therapy* (OJOT) is pleased to recognize Dr. Kathleen “Kit” Sinclair, PhD, OTR/L, FWOT, FAOTA, as the sponsor of the spring 2017 issue. Dr. Sinclair has served two terms as president of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT). Occupational therapy education has always been Dr. Sinclair’s passion. She is editor of the prestigious WFOT Bulletin, the official journal of WFOT. Her role as a global educator and advocate began approximately 50 years ago.

Dr. Sinclair earned her bachelor of science degree in occupational therapy in 1967 from Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, MO. As a new graduate, Dr. Sinclair wanted to see the world, so she joined the Peace Corps. Her first assignment was to address tuberculosis control and family planning in the rural countryside of South Korea. When she learned that she was the only occupational therapist in the country, she transferred to work as an occupational therapist at an orphanage for children with disabilities in Seoul, Korea.

With 2 years of the Peace Corps completed, Dr. Sinclair continued her world journey in Hong Kong, where she was one of just 25 expatriate occupational therapists. Meeting her future husband gave her a reason to stay. In 1978, when the Hong Kong Polytechnic University started an occupational therapy education program, Dr. Sinclair became a founding faculty member. As China opened up, she and her colleagues developed student-led teaching and learning workshops for rehabilitation professionals in mainland China. These courses promoted more effective and less didactic teaching of rehabilitation for Chinese colleagues, but also helped Dr. Sinclair’s Hong Kong students better understand the then unfamiliar health care system. Hong Kong occupational therapists now regularly provide lectures and training in the mainland.

WFOT is the official representative of the occupational therapy profession worldwide. In 1984, Dr. Sinclair represented the Hong Kong Occupational Therapy Association when it was accepted into WFOT. Two years later, Dr. Sinclair was elected treasurer of WFOT, a post she held for 10 years before resigning to complete her PhD. In 2002, Dr. Sinclair was elected president of WFOT, a position in which she served from 2002 to 2008. Throughout her tenure on the WFOT executive board, Dr. Sinclair provided voluntary consultation for national associations and government ministries in developing occupational therapy services

and educational programs in South America, Africa, and Asia. Representing WFOT, she consulted with the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Department of Public Information, and other international non-government organizations. In 1998, Dr. Sinclair was named honorary fellow of WFOT, the highest honor awarded by the organization. In 2000, she was recognized as a fellow of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA). In 2003, Dr. Sinclair earned her PhD. with a focus on the clinical reasoning of occupational therapists.

After the major earthquake and tsunami struck the Indian Ocean region in 2004, Dr. Sinclair led a project to investigate and promote the role of occupational therapists in post disaster recovery. The WFOT project team conducted regional and national workshops focusing on disaster management and community redevelopment. The purpose of this project was to facilitate occupational therapy involvement in disaster preparedness and response around the world.



Dr. Sinclair's team recently developed an online course titled "Disaster Management for Occupational Therapists" The course leads students through a reality oriented learning experience to recognize the potential contribution of occupational therapists to disaster response; resilience; and risk reduction involving individuals, communities, and populations at risk and affected by disaster. This course will soon be available to occupational therapists practicing around the world.

Dr. Sinclair continues to live in Hong Kong where she remains devoted to higher education and global advocacy for the occupational therapy profession. Dr. Sinclair has maintained her position as adjunct assistant professor at Hong Kong Polytechnic University, where most of its 15 occupational therapy professors were her previous students. She also serves as honorary professor of the Department of Rehabilitation of Tung Wah College in Hong Kong, and as adjunct professor at Cebu Doctors' University in the Philippines. Dr. Sinclair has a love of adventure and incorporates her occupational therapy interests with her passion for travel. Many wonderful opportunities have emerged throughout Dr. Sinclair's professional life. "When doors open, you can go through, or stay where you are," she says. "Of course you have to recognize the doors. They may be local, international, or virtual. But if you stay still, well, enough said."

Dr. Sinclair will be visiting the Western Michigan University campus on April 17 and 18, 2017, to facilitate the Sinclair Creek Centennial Lecture. This event is offered in collaboration with the Occupational Therapy Community Advisory Board at Western Michigan University. To learn more visit:

<https://wmich.edu/ot/sinclaircreek>

To learn more about the World Federation of Occupational Therapists visit: www.wfot.org